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KNOTTING MATTERS

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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KNOTTING MATTERS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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The editors welcome the submission of letters, articles, photographs and sketches for publication. Correspondence may be by e-mail **knottingmatters@igkt.net** but more extensive items, such as articles for publication, as well as any pictures, which should be of good quality, need to be sent as attachments. All submissions must include their author's name and e-mail or postal address.

If events are to be publicised in *Knotting Matters*, note the months of publication- March, June, September and December. Although the deadline for the next issue is given at the foot of the Contents page, please note that the editors begin putting it together at least three weeks earlier.

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KNOTTING MATTERS

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PLEASE NOTE: LETTERS & ARTICLES FOR THE JUNE 2022 *KNOTTING MATTERS* MUST BE RECEIVED BY 14th MAY

FRONT COVER: 5-POINT STAR ON SWORD MAT, PART OF PENTAGON FRAME SEE P42

EDITORIAL

By the time this edition hits your door mat, it seems a bit late to wish everyone a Happy New Year and Covid, while ever present, seems to be a bit 'old news'.

When some typos were discovered in Eric Franklin's book (see PG, p45), it led to a very interesting discussion amongst ourselves (editors and PG) about how we all react to finding something that we think might be a mistake in print. Do we all make an automatic assumption that we are the problem? Am I too thick? Cack-handed? Concerned that, by asking a question publicly, I open myself to ridicule from all those other members who understood the author perfectly? However, we hope that the recent discussion about the Möbius TH might have allayed some fears! On one level, it is disappointing that the book has gone through different printings and editing without comment, but then, I have also had it for years without noticing anything.

We were blown away by the Pentagon Frame pp42-45 and the quality of the work displayed. Can an article possibly do it justice? That will be for you to decide!

Some members will remember Richard Hopkins' piece about Windy Chien and her 'Knot a day' venture (*KM* 143, 13-14.) We can now share a review of her promised publication, Book Review (p50).

There are three very heartening elements to this edition of *KM*: we count five 'new' contributors in this edition, which is our first 56-page bumper issue and there are three references to recent articles. This is very encouraging, both for us and for all those authors and correspondents, but this is no reason for easing off on the current moderate but welcome stream of material.

We have heard of long delays in the delivery of KM which is posted to arrive in March, June, September and December. Please, please, if you have not received your copy by the end of the month following the publication month, without fail contact our Membership Secretary membership@igkt.net

Once again, a plea regarding images. Many in this edition were sent as 72 dpi when we would prefer 200 or more. However, no matter the dpi value, should the image be out of focus or unclear, then no amout of editing will make it better. It is good to see that many of you are including images with the Scale Card.

One last thought: "If you want to do it properly, do it with tar! (see pp20-25)

All the best. M

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Maurice

On the matter of Needle-hitching: the pull-out on needle-hitching provided by Ewa Thormahlen in *KM* 153 caught my eye immediately and provides an opportunity to share enthusiasm for this form of decoration.

I was drawn to this knot-form in the very early years of the IGKT and provide a photograph of two tools (pricker and paper knife), the handles of which were 'dressed' using natural fibre cord. The hitching remains in perfect condition to this day after regular use over many years. Articles and tools covered with this hitching give a familiar and satisfying sense of touch whenever they come to hand.

A further photo shows one of my turned pencil pots-cum-dice-shakers decorated with needle-hitching, and an everyday working tool handle with the Guild emblem overlaid for good measure.

A few words about the one-and-only source of instructive information about needle-hitching that I followed may be useful to Ewa and anyone else attracted to this form of decorative knotting. All the credit goes to the late (great) knotmaster Stuart E. Grainger mainly using the 38-page, card-covered, A4-size booklet he created for the IGKT entitled *An Introduction to Knot Tying and Fancy Work* (see pages 19-38). His published hardcover book *Creative Ropecraft* (ISBN 0 948788 35 6) also contains a short section on Needle or Half-hitching. The first-mentioned is exceptionally detailed and covers, for example, a start using a single overhand knot, numerous patterns, lazy strands, use of twists, hitch-spacing, incorporation of beads, joining ends by splicing when a new length of cord is introduced etc. And if I remember correctly, all the artwork was his own.

Three more of his books are to be found in the IGKT sales listed in *KM*. A final comment on this work for anyone coming to it afresh is that you do need time, patience and care. But the feeling you will get as each well-constructed half-hitch locks into place and the perfectly even pattern develops gives its own reward for the effort.

Vernon Hughes

Dear Maurice,

I received a copy of the new book *Exploring Turks Heads* and was proud to see the article 'A New Dimension in Turks Heads' written by my son, Jim Wolf from *KM* 109.

I had the idea and played with it for a long time before I got it right. Jim had taken the idea to an IGKT meeting in England, several said it couldn't be done. Europa picked up on it and went back in her notes and found that someone else had a similar idea, she tied that one, which she gave me when I was over there. In that one there was only one crossing from the left to the right and one coming back where as mine makes a crossing each time you come around. The knot she gave me holds a special place on a shelf in my home.

After I did finally get it, I gave a lot of thought to the idea of adding more to it, instead of two side-by-side (Siamese TH) it could be done with 3, 4, 5 or any number, it could also be done in a circle as well as a square. This all makes the name Siamese obsolete and I still haven't settled on what that new dimension could be called.

I did talk extensively to Don Burrhus about the idea and he wanted to write on the concept in his *Cook Book*. Unfortunately, Don disappeared before he did, a great loss in my opinion. I was very honoured when my son wrote the article for *KM* and it was reprinted in this new book. The scout pictured is my grandson not the author's. I must thank Des Pawson for suggesting the name. It truly is a new dimension.

James (Jim) E. Wolf

Dear Maurice,

A local parish church has what's left of a fine 16thC rood screen, accepted to be 1535-1540 - very ornate carving. One small panel has an image of two mythical beasts 'united' with a rosary, the nether end of which appears to be bound with a Turks Head (or similar). Either the cords are gathered in a knot, or have the knot as a collar.

David Pepper

Dear Maurice,

Found this interesting piece of leather in my shed and thought our members might help with a name or information about it.
From a flat, specially cut piece of leather to a card wallet takes a few minutes to do, and sort of follows a Crown knot plan to achieve.
Any knowledge please.
Barry Smith

Dear Maurice,

Some time ago I sent a couple of pictures of the window display of Harvey Nichols store in Bristol. The display was in place during the first lockdown and for a while after that.

You wondered if there was any more that could be added.

I do not often go into Bristol to shop but made an effort when the restrictions were eased and enquired at the store about the display and was given the email address of the person to ask.

It appears that the display, or window scheme as they call it, was developed by their production team. The schemes start in the Knightsbridge store and then

throughout a two-year run, they go from store to store to ensure it is made good use of and isn't just a throw-away. When each scheme has come to the end of its run, they offer the props to charities and local companies, therefore nothing is just discarded.

In terms of installing it, a team of two Harvey Nichols' production team, as well as the instore display team (two people) and four freelancers took one week to install the pre-made props.

I am still waiting for the promised follow-up reply to my query as to how long it took to make, how much cordage was used and how many people were involved, but do not in all honesty expect to hear from them again.

The display filled about ten or twelve windows but had been taken down by the time I made my enquiry and replaced with bland furnishings or clothing.

Hope these pictures will be of use. Maybe another reader will be able to say where the display has gone next.
Richard Hopkins

Editors' note: Perhaps an IGKT member had been asked to advise. Or maybe some of those involved were members. If so, it would be nice to hear from them. Has anyone spotted the photographer?

Dear Maurice,

Re the Möbius: After Fig 6 on p7 in *Charlie's Knots*, I move the bight over one finger so that the 9th bight which is the one between your thumb and index finger (Fig 7) is now on the forefinger. Yes, this is where the twist is.

Now double or triple the knot, I found three-strand better than two to see the knot. Take the knot off your hand and NOTE the 'small loose loop' around the 9th bight this is so you don't lose it (Fig 8). Tighten the knot keeping it flat (Fig 9). Now make the twist at the 9th bight (Fig 10) one half twist 180º and note the bight is on top of the twist and also note the two strands on the outside of the twist are crossed over each other. Do not be fooled and think you can uncross these strands, you will get all the way through the knot only to find they are still crossed.

One more thing, I used 10ft (3m) of cord for the two-strand and 15ft (4.5m) for the three-strand with a foot or two left to cut off. Dave Lambert

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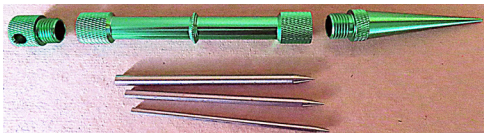
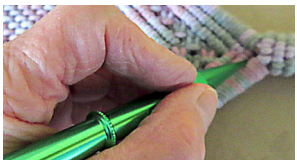
Dear Maurice



Tool News. This is the latest version of a marlinespike (right), available online from several suppliers in black, silver or green, with an anodised aluminium finish. A unique selling point is its slender length and diameter, 18cm (7in) by 1cm (about ½ in), with a gentle taper to cope with smaller cords and ropes. Unscrew either end to access a set of three, internally threaded lacing needles (outer diam 2, 3 and 5mm). A hole in the screw-top is for a lanyard, and it will accept a pocket clip.

The spike may be grasped in one's fist or held like a pen for greater precision. Use it to poke, prod, prise apart, or tighten paracording and other knot work;



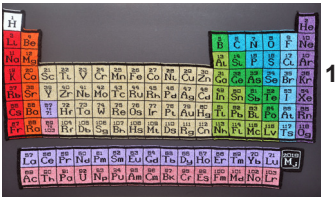
but it is a lightweight tool perhaps best kept for indoor use, rather than rugged outdoor pursuits either ashore or afloat. Still, it's a handy addition to any toolkit. My version, via Amazon, cost US $38·00 (plus shipping to the UK). Geoffrey Budworth

Cavandoli

by Geoffrey Budworth

'An industrious worker, with but a little patience and experience, can originate a great variety of designs and patterns' (Graumont & Hensel[1])

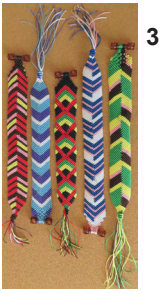
Macramé is best viewed as an arrangement of holes, artfully constructed with reef or square-knotting and half-hitches, whereas Cavandoli is row upon row of coupled half-hitches, or Clove Hitches, without the holes. Both techniques are commonly referred to as macramé, but Cavandoli has evolved into a distinct off-shoot from square-knotting. It takes one or other of two forms: horizontal or diagonal. In the first (1 & 2), numerous warp strands are traversed by a single weft. Planned out on graph or other squared paper, geometrical patterns may be created. So too can letters and numbers, an impressive recent example being a representation by Jane Stewart of the entire Periodic Table of Elements.[2]



1

2

Alternatively, each warp strand in turn is used as the weft or filler strand to which the others are half-hitched in diagonal rows, resulting in a variety of chevron patterns (below). Each one of the smaller samplers (3), was tied in 20 strands of 1mm diameter embroidery silks using around 2,500 half-hitches, and is 2in or 5cm wide. The larger ones (4 & 5) used the same number of strands and knots, with 3mm diameter cotton cords resulting in a width of 3in or 7·5cm.



3

4

This technique is named after Valentina Cavandoli (b.1872, Italy) who by all accounts, was headmistress of a school for poor and/or orphaned children called the *Casa Del Sole* (House of the Sun) in the Italian city of Turin around the end of the First World War.

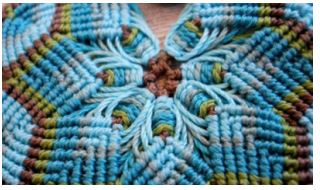
5

To keep the 100 children of both sexes aged 3-15yrs busy, she is credited[3&4] with introducing this method of half-hitching which she had learned from her great-grandmother. Items made by the children, including clothing accessories and interior home decoration, were sold in charity markets or given to benefactors of the school, and the money earned from these products, all of which, according to one online source,[5] were horizontal work, was tallied and given to the youngsters when they left the school.

Ashley,[6] in Chapter 32, 'Square Knotting' failed to mention any Cavandoli knotting. Five years earlier, however, Graumont, Hensel & Wenstrom[1&7] included numerous photographs of both horizontal and diagonal Cavandoli, but labelled them 'closely woven half-hitching' or in places 'wampum designs'. Today their monochrome photographs are lacklustre and any tying guidance is sketchy.

The second Cavandoli style (6 & 7) has each warp strand in turn as the weft or filler strand to which the others are half-hitched in diagonal bars.

6



7

Friendship braids can be a simple way into this technique. Try Suzanne McNeill's 2021 books,[8] although others are available. Then again, Märchen Art Studios have published the most comprehensive selection of macramé knots.[9] But to learn Cavandoli, you must tie a lot of Cavandoli, when the following suggestions might be useful.

I never use a macramé board and T-pins, preferring *ad hoc* lash-ups with a couple of small G-clamps or shelf brackets (8) to hold the work. My only tools are a mini-fid to pick apart any mistakes (they do happen) and a pair of scissors. This work-place is completed by an armless, backless kneeling stool, or my typing chair which can be raised or lowered to match the height of the work in progress, although its arms do snag the odd strand.

8

All of the samples I tied for this article used 16 or 20 strands, each of 3, 2 or 1mm diameter. Some of them were tied with four colours, the others with three. Each design depended upon the distribution of colours at the start, as well as the combination of NW to SE and NE to SW Clove-hitched diagonal bars. None was planned, all of them made up as I went along. Cavandoli can, of course, be scaled up or down by using more or fewer, thicker or thinner cords.

The diagonal bars act as tunnels into which selected strands dive, travelling unseen, to re-emerge elsewhere. This is how designs are contrived. Colours featuring most in patterns take fewer tunnelling short-cuts and so are consumed quicker than those appearing less often. As the work progresses, and the different lengths become obvious, longer ones can be snipped off level with the shorter ones to reduce needless pulling through. Some tyers choose to start with shorter strands, adding extra lengths as the work progresses, which is easily done with Cavandoli, the ends being hidden on the reverse side of the half-hitching. Alternatively, as the back of diagonal Cavandoli is as good looking as the front, I often display it that way. This disguises how the abrupt changes in colour are achieved. But doing so rules out adding extra strands, compelling one to work from the outset with strands of the necessary length.

Individual colours cross the half-hitched bars at right-angles. So, A-shape bars generate V-shaped chevrons; and V-shaped bars produce A-shaped chevrons. Combining both creates a diamond. Bars sloping only from NW to SE, or vice versa, would produce 45° stripes, and combined, they form zig-zags. From those beginnings, many other combinations are possible.

Do not tie every individual strand directly onto the filler strand currently in use. Instead, tie each half-hitch *with the filler strand* tripping and throwing it onto the strand for which it is intended, before sliding it snugly beside the preceding half-hitching. Repeat the process to complete a clove hitch. In the early stages while the strands are long, pull them through doubled to half their actual length, or twice-doubled to a quarter the length.

Cavandoli involves repeatedly pulling long strands through a lot of half-hitches, around 2,000 in each of the simple examples shown; and, while the strands remain long, they will become kinked, snarled up and occasionally knotted, as each and every half-hitch imparts a kink lower down. Be willing to pause your knotting at intervals to untangle them. This is still preferable to storing the surplus lengths on bobbins.

Narrow ware can make eye-catching belts, straps (for guitar or camera), and bands (for hat or head). But scaled up or down, Cavandoli is used for all kinds of personal items and adornment, as well as indoor décor such as tapestries, and abstract artwork from fantastic masks to the wall-hanging which also includes a couple of square-knotted panels. Alternatively, micro-Cavandoli makes jewellery. Whatever you choose to do: Happy, Inventive Cavandoli!

REFERENCES

1 *The Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work* (Chapter IX: Macramé, Tatting, Fringe and Needlework), by Raoul Graumont and John Hensel, published by Cornell Maritime Press Inc. (1939)

2 *Knotting Matters* (June 2019), Periodic Table Special Edition.

3 *The Anchor Manual of Needlework*, published by B.T. Batsford (London 1966)

4 www.italian-needlework.blogspot.com

5 www.pieceworkmagazine.com.how-did-they-do-that

6 *The Ashley Book of Knots* (Chapter 32: Square Knotting), by Clifford W. Ashley, published by Doubleday Doran & Co. Inc. (New York 1944) and Faber & Faber (London 1947)

7 *The Square Knot Handicraft Guide*, by Raoul Graumont and Elmer Wenstrom, published by Cornell Maritime Press Inc. (1943)

8 *Friendship Bracelets* 101 and 102 (2021)

9 *Macramé Pattern Book – Includes Over 70 Knots and Small Repeat Patterns Plus Projects*, Märchen Art Studios, Supervised by The Japan Macramé Association (2011), English edition by St Martin's Press, NY (2013)

NOTE: Figs 1, 2 are reproduced from *Knotting Matters,* all other illustrated knotting was tied and photographed by the author.

Soft Fist

by Nosmo King

I recently visited a small, rural company which made, repaired and renovated vehicle winches. I wanted to buy a length of the rope for experimental purposes. It comes in various breaking-strains and colours, and very pretty they are too!

Needless to say it is not your average rope, rather the high tech Kevlar-type woven material. A suitable length was found and was exchanged for a quantity of tea and sugar; yes bartering is still practised in these parts!

What did catch my eye was a very nice soft shackle in intense red (right). The proprietor was telling me that the knot always, eventually works its way to the end. I was telling him the issue with this synthetic is the almost total absence of stretch, which leads to unintended consequences such as this. As a matter of interest the breaking strain of the 14 mm material is 25 tons. I imagine if you get anywhere near needing that, you will have other worries! His parting shot was, "It's a Monkeys Fist!" I hesitated an instant, then replied, "Well isn't that interesting".

Flagging up a Problem

by Domenick DeCaria

As a volunteer leader with our local Cub Scout Pack in Bountiful, Utah, USA, I came to notice the hodgepodge of methods used to attach the group's US and Pack flags to their associated staffs. These included a leather strand, a fraying bit of jute cord, and an industrial-strength zip tie. I wanted to use rope craft to replace these with something that was a little more ornate than a Reef knot while still being secure and allowing the flags to be removed for cleaning.

I spent some time considering options and experimenting with different knots in various bits of cordage. I landed upon a solution that included a button and loop fastener held in place on the staff with a Turks Head. I discussed my idea with the Pack leader and suggested options for material. I liked the look of natural cordage but also allowed that synthetics would give some nice colours that would appeal to the Cub Scouts. The Pack leader agreed and opted for the latter, so I found styles of 550 paracord that had similar colors to the two flags and set to work.

The first task was figuring out a length for the loop fastener and an appropriate knot for the button. In *The Ashley Book of Knots*, the author describes improvising a pair of cuff links out of cord (see #980). I liked his description of tying a doubled Chinese Button knot with the two ends of a cord. This method allowed me to have a mid-line loop and to use the Button knot to constrain the ends. I was concerned that the loop could easily be pulled out from under the Turks Head holding it to the staff. I resolved this by adding a knife lanyard knot to the loop to limit its movement.

I worked up an example of this and carefully adjusted the size of the loop until I had something that would work well with the size of the Button knot. I tied a 3x5 Turks Head around the staff and the loop.

I tested my prototype with a flag and satisfied myself that the loop was just large enough to pass through the grommet and allow the button to fit snuggly through the loop.

I also found that after fastening the flag, I could pull the little existing slack of the loop through the Turks Head band to snug the captured button for added

security. I made three more sets to match my prototype. To keep the Turks Head from coming loose I used a needle and thread to seize the hidden ends.

Having finished assembling the US flag in this fashion, I turned to the Pack flag and encountered an issue. Scouting units may receive ribbons to recognize group achievements or participation in events and such, and these are traditionally displayed atop the staff holding the Pack flag. Our Pack is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2022, so we have amassed quite a number of these ribbons. They had formed quite the tangle, and I was very reluctant to touch that Gordian knot! But when I went to cut the zip tie that was holding the top of the flag to the staff, I discovered many of the ribbons were attached directly to the zip tie. In the end, I took the leap and managed (with the help of a pricker) to disentangle every one.

I tied a larger Turks Head at the top of the staff dedicated to the display of the ribbons. I opted for what I knew at the time, which was a simple 3x5 Turks Head with several passes to create multiple attachment points.

This worked well, and I was able to space out the ribbons across the whole knot. Having undertaken larger-lead Turks Heads following the publication of 'Turks Head Enlargements' by Manny Sardinia in *KM* 153, I would opt for a larger knot were I to undertake such a project again.

I have been pleased with the results, which have provided the decorative yet functional attachments I set out to achieve. The new attachments on the flags have now been in use for several months and have been serving their purpose well.

A Bell-rope for RSV Nuyina

by Dr Barbara Frankel

On Saturday 18 December 2021, a ship's bell was rung during the ceremonial launch of Australia's new state-of-the-art icebreaker RSV Nuyina in the Macquarie Wharf Cruise Terminal, Hobart, Tasmania (*lutruwita* in the local Aboriginal language, Palawa kani). The ship itself was alongside within a few metres of the attending crowd, and the ship's horn replied to the sound of the bell with a single long blast. The bell-rope was in the hand of the Australian Prime Minister, The Hon Scott Morrison, who was visiting Tasmania with the Governor General of Australia, His Excellency General The Hon David Hurley, four days after the Tasmanian borders opened to all states for the first time in nearly two years, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This bell-rope was made by me.

The ship had arrived in October from its Romanian construction site during a snap 3-day lockdown thanks to the 'Covidiot' who ran amok, threatening to bring the virus to our (then) Covid-free state. The flotilla that had been planned, including me in the throng aboard the Lady Nelson (a replica of the 1799 English-built square-rigged brig), was cancelled. This ceremony made up for the lack of grandeur on her arrival.

The RSV Nuyina has replaced the RSV Aurora Australis which served the Australian Antarctic Program for 30 years. The name, pronounced *Noy – yee – na,* means 'southern lights' (or aurora australis) in Palawa kani, thereby maintaining a historical link with not only its immediate predecessor, but the original ship named Aurora that served Sir Douglas Mawson and Sir Ernest Shackleton on their Antarctic voyages in the early 1900s.

The ceremonial bell was presented to the ship by Major George Friend, President of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) Club.

This club was formed in 1951 for those who had been to Antarctica with the Australian program. Having been down south over a dozen times as a Glaciologist and Geotechnical Project Manager, I have been a member for over 20 years.

The twenty kilos of brass was cast at Olds Foundry in Maryborough, Queensland thanks to Antarctican Trevor Luff and his ANARE Club network. On the very day the bell was being cast (15 July 2021), I happened to make my enquiry to the ANARE Club asking if I could make the bell-rope for it. A nice coincidence! My offer was wholeheartedly welcomed, especially once I'd sent photos of some of my knotwork, and explained that I was a club member.

Tools and accessories for the Nuyina bell-rope.

The criteria for the bell-rope were that it needed to be white, short, and with brass thimble and shackle. For the cord, I was lucky enough to be in possession of a traditional wooden rope-making machine that had been made for the Australian Wooden-Boat Festival in 2019 out of local Tasmanian timbers (Celery-top pine, Blackwood and Huon pine). It seemed only appropriate to use this magnificent machine to make the cord for this bell-rope, so with the help of my son, my partner and a friend, we made two 7m lengths of hard-laid white cotton cord of 3.5mm diameter. The thread I used was from the Tasmanian Handweavers, Dyers and Spinners Guild rated at 30 epi (I've yet to translate this weaving nomenclature into a thread size).

So I had the cord, but what about the brass accessories? I quickly ascertained that brass thimbles were not available! Perhaps some could be sourced from overseas but not in the timeframe I had. I had made a prototype bell-rope just to play with design and method, using a stainless-steel thimble, and had resigned myself to using this silver-coloured version when I was serendipitously invited to visit my friend David Heard. David is a retired netmaker, and had got in touch with me through the Living Boat Trust in Franklin on the Huon River, where I'd been teaching some decorative knotting.

I took along my prototype just to show him and told him the sad tale that I had given up looking for a brass thimble. We were standing in his workshop below his house in Kingston, and to my absolute delight he reached into a bucket behind him and produced an old tarnished brass thimble of exactly the size I was looking for and said, "What, like this?" I nearly fell over backwards! YES!

David very kindly donated this small but significant accessory to the Nuyina's bell-rope. It polished up beautifully with my Dremel.

Brass shackles are not difficult to obtain, so having bought some of these online I was almost ready to begin the construction. Just one last thing. How would a white bell-rope in the hands of all those who might ring the bell over the next 30 years stay white? I was concerned about it getting grubby, and wanting to keep to traditional methods, I decided shellac was the appropriate protection. I'd experimented and was disappointed to see how much shellac changed the white to its inherent yellow. After a little more research I bought some bleached dewaxed shellac. Now I had everything I needed.

My design was based on those I'd learned from Des Pawson's book, *Knot Craft and Rope Mats* but with some embellishments: the thimble, a stiffening dowel down the centre, and a weighted ball in a globe knot on its end (in this case a glass drawer knob with its mount removed, cheaper and easier than buying a 30mm marble, or any other weighted ball).

I cut the two 7m lengths of cord in half, making four 3.5m lengths and tied a 4-strand braid halfway along, and pulled it tight around the thimble with a temporary Constrictor knot. I then made my favourite knot, a Matthew Walker, followed by 7cm of 8-strand Crown sennit, a Diamond knot, and 7.5cm of double-strand Crown sennit, all pulled tightly around the dowel in the centre. I finished with an 8-strand, three-pass Globe knot around the glass ball. Two coats of bleached shellac completed the project. There is still a slight yellow tinge but it's acceptable. I admit there is some glue in strategic places but don't tell anyone!

I had been in discussion with Trevor Luff about a clapper dampener, realising that when a ship rolls (for which round-hulled icebreakers are renowned) the last thing you want is a loose clapper.

I had thought about a leather sheath, or perhaps rubber, but it dawned on me that a Turks Head that could be pulled over the clapper or pushed up the stem out of the way stretched out just might work. I used the same type of cord, and to my delight it worked a treat!

The completed bell-rope and Turk's Head clapper sheath on the clapper (pre shellac).

And it's the first Turks Head I've ever tied in hand (thanks to Lindsey Philpott whose instructions I followed). It can be eased over the clapper ball to fit snugly, or it can be pushed up, elongated, and rested on the clapper ball (as pictured previous page), clearing the ball to make contact with the bell.

An elegant solution I think. However, Trevor was ahead of me. He'd designed the bracket with tie points to allow a cord or wire to hold the clapper against the bell. Between us I think we solved the issue and the bell won't toll unless desired!

More information can be found at https://www.antarctica.gov.au/nuyina/ and on Facebook pages *Australis Knots* and *ANARE Club.*

The author with the bell-rope. Note the Turks Head eased snugly around the clapper ball.

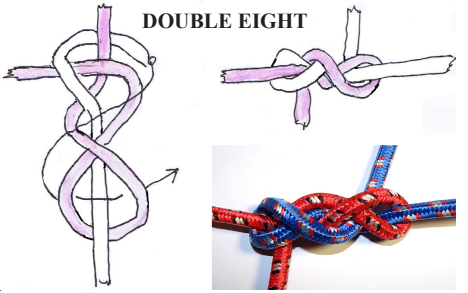
The bell and bell-rope that will be installed on the bridge aboard the RSV Nuyina.

If there's a topic which you would like to have aired during the open session of the AGM in May, write to *KM* before 25th April, and we'll pass on your message.

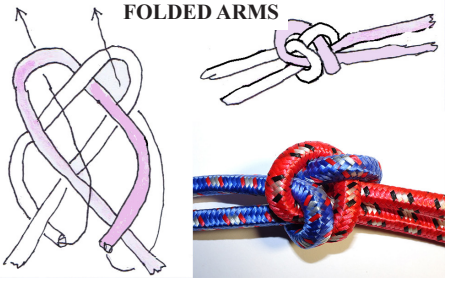
Three Bends with a Difference

by Owen K Nuttall

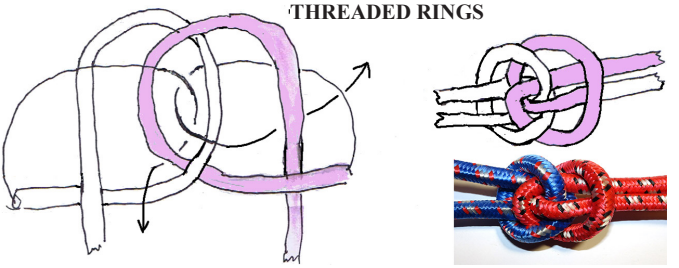
Three bends with a big difference. I first tied these knots in the 70s along with many more. I sent these three and 18 more to *KM* in 1985, one year after I joined the Guild, all of them have appeared in *KM*. Two under a different name. My two were 'little beauty' and 'double eight' which appeared in *KM* 43 as 'hawser bend one and two' by Jack Reimann. A letter in *KM* 46 disputes this. I have used the double eight many times for joining two ends of rope when I worked in the building trade. I think this is one of the strongest bends for joining two ends of rope, the bonus being that it is easily untied: just turn the knot over and push down on the two end bights.



'Folded arms' is a neat, strong, compact bend, which belies the number of crossing points in its construction. The downside of a knot which has been under a heavy load, is that it becomes a 'knife' knot. A small price to pay for security. If the working ends are reversed through the loops it turns into another bend, more open but still secure.



The third knot always makes me smile when I tie it. It's an illusion knot (threaded rings). The late Harry Asher called this type of knot, brooch knots. I like to cut the standing part and the working end about three inches from the knot and whip the two ends together, to make it hard to work out which is which. This knot made its appearance in *KM* 18.



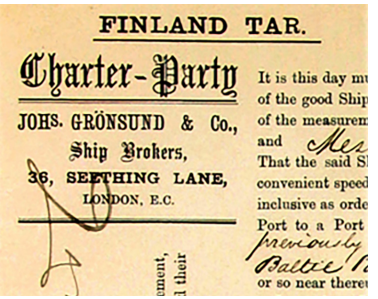
oknots1937@gmail.com

A Brief History of Stockholm Tar

by Mikko Snellman

When we talk about ropes, our thoughts often wander to the age of sail. No wonder, as in the late 1800s the manufacturing of natural-fibre ropes reached its peak. The ships were made of wood and incredible amounts of rope were used in their rigging. As important as it was to use good quality wood for the ships and the best available hemp for the ropes, these were natural materials, sensitive to decay in harsh conditions at sea. The best-known method of preserving them, was by treating them with good-quality pine tar, known as Stockholm Tar.

For centuries, Finland was the world's leading manufacturer and exporter of high-quality pine tar and most of the world's sailing ships depended on this product, made in the backwoods of Finland. The knowledge of how to 'burn tar' and Finland's large forests were the reasons why tar became its most important export.


FINLAND TAR.

Charter-Party

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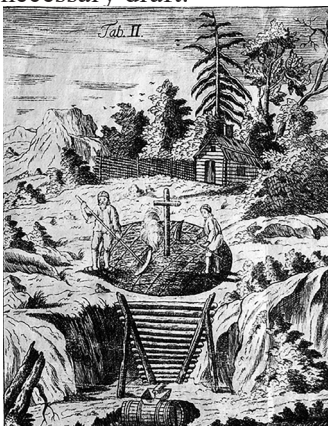
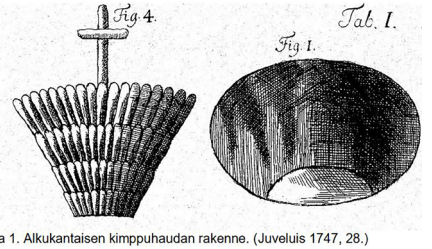
JOHS. GRÖNSUND & Co.,
Ship Brokers,
36, SEETHING LANE,
LONDON, E.C.

The knowledge of how to 'burn' tar is probably as old as the skill of building wooden boats. The word 'tar' (t´er, törv, tera) is one of the oldest words in Finnish, reaching back a couple of thousand years. Actually, the process is not 'burning' but 'dry distilling' when pine wood is heated until the resin runs out as tar. Tar can be distilled further, resulting in pitch. Originally tar was burned, for household use, in a 'wind dale', built in a depression of a slope that could only be burnt when wind provided the necessary draft.



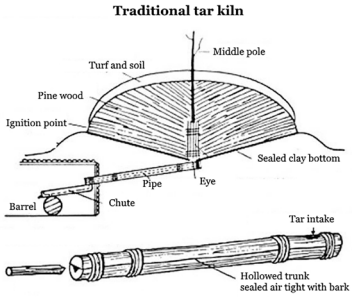
The round tar kilns, still called dales, came later. They first began to be popular when tar became mass-produced. At first they were small in diameter and tall, the split pieces of pine being placed vertically.



Kuva 1. Alkukantaisen kimppuhaudan rakenne. (Juveluis 1747, 28.)

The trunks were not used, but rather the roots and injured tops – both with a high pitch content. The tar was collected in a vessel placed under the kiln.

The modern kiln was developed from this original format, placing the wood horizontally, the invention of Mr Mursula in the 1660s. It allowed kilns to be lower and larger in diameter. At first they were built two stories high, so that the lower part, where the tar was collected, was contained in a large hole in the ground, sealed with clay and boards, which could hold tens of barrels of tar. Later on, the lower part was replaced with an opening under the kiln (the eye) leading to a hollowed-out trunk which channeled the hot tar from the bottom of the kiln to a barrel.



Kuva 10. Perinteisen tervahaudan osat ja rakenne. (Keskitalo 2011.)

The largest kilns were 20-30m in diameter and contained 100-200 fathoms of wood (1 fathom = 3.77m^3), producing 100-200 barrels of tar (1 tar barrel = Rostock barrel = 125 litres)

This required lots of wood and a new kiln was built when the unfelled part of the forest was too far away to transport the wood. As a result old kilns are found along rivers, every 1 – 2km.

An important part of tar production was preparing pines to maximise the pitch content, by stripping a third of the bark, three years in a row. This caused the pitch in the roots to rise higher up the trunk. In the fourth winter the pines were cut, transported to the kiln and split. After drying in the late winter sun, the kiln was prepared for burning.

The bottom of the kiln was lined with clay, or in modern times, with roofing felt.

The split pine pieces are placed sloping towards the eye, and a stone placed on the eye to prevent it from clogging.

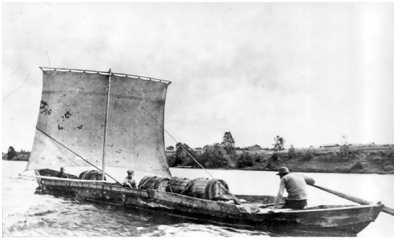
A pole is placed in the middle to measure the height during the burning process, and final adjustments are made to compact the kiln.

The final form is a dome and the kiln is covered with turf or spruce twigs and soil. The kiln is set on fire in several places and when hot enough, it is smothered so there are no flames.

After a couple of days, the tar starts running. Burning can take over a week and great care has to be taken so that the kiln doesn´t catch fire. The colour of the smoke indicates the temperature in the kiln. Black smoke means it is too hot and the tar is burning. The collecting barrels are filled with water to swell the staves to keep them ‘water tight’. Under the kiln, the tar runs from the eye into the barrels, firstly as water mixed with tar, so called ‘tar piss’.

The barrels were 77cm high, 53cm in diameter made of 13 pieces of pinewood, bound together with spruce hoops, four on each end. Top and bottom were made of three pieces of wood, grain running vertically when the filling cap is on top. They had to be done this way, so that they would hold when stowed above each other in a ship.

If the kiln was placed by a river, the barrels were transported to the coast in special tar boats. The largest boats were 14m long and 110cm wide, holding 22 – 32 barrels.



Inland, transport was horse-drawn.

Once at the coast, tar was sold to tar companies, who carried out quality control for each barrel, labeling them for light, medium or thick, light being the best quality. It was not uncommon for sellers to try to cheat, by putting some mud or ice into the barrels. Bribing with alcohol was a common practice. J.W.Snellman´s tar agent wrote to him that he had hired "ihan spiknykter terva vräkäri" (a totally sober tar quality controller).

Tar was exported around the world, the Royal Navy being the biggest single customer.

In 1550, Finland exported just a few hundred barrels but the number rose rapidly, and by 1640, Finland's three main towns, Turku, Helsinki and Vyborg, sent 54,000 barrels abroad. Tar had become Finland's biggest export product.

At the time Finland was part of the Swedish empire and together Sweden-Finland was the world's leading tar exporter, 80% from Finland. The Swedish government considered the tar business far too important for the country that it could be left in the hands of individual merchants, so in 1648, sole responsibility for export was given to "Norrländska Tjärkompaniet" which

regulated the prices and production quantities. The tar was then exported from Stockholm and barrels were labeled as Stockholm Tar. This monopoly held until 1712 when tar was again exported from Finnish towns such as Turku, Helsinki and Vyborg, but the brand name has remained even to this day.

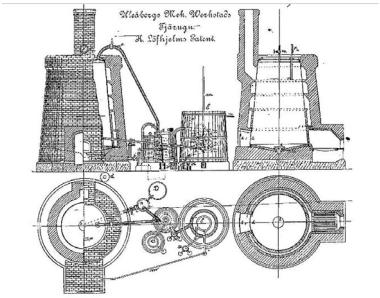
Tar was burned mostly inland in southern Finland but when Vyborg was lost to Russia in the war, production moved up to Ostrobothnia. The best price for wood products was for timber, masts and spars but they were expensive to transport to the coast, so from inland, tar yielded better profit. When Uleåborg (Oulu) got export rights in 1765 it soon expanded to become the world's leading tar exporter. The peak was in 1863 when 227,000 barrels were exported from Uleåborg.

At the end of the 1800s iron was replacing wood in ships and steam was replacing sail, so the demand for tar reduced. At the same time, other forest products became more profitable, so the price of tar rose. However, the export continued, until in 1901 the tar company's buildings burned down along with 14,493 barrels of tar. When the British fleet had destroyed the tar houses by fire in 1854, the company had been rebuilt even larger, but after 1901 only temporary buildings were erected.

The last tar boat came down the Oulu river to Toppila in 1927.

In the present day, the demand for good quality kiln-distilled tar, is quite small, the biggest users being churches with wooden roofing. Some wooden ships still remain and even some new ones are built each year.

There are still some producers who build kilns each year to produce a few thousand litres of tar but most modern tar is made by pyrolysis in tar ovens. This was invented by a bricklayer, Otto Korkiakoski, in the 1850s but at the time the building costs were too high, so it didn´t gain popularity. Modern ovens are usually made of steel, and the method can be easily adapted to household burning in steel barrels and produces quite good quality tar. Often to speed up the process a higher temperature is used, resulting in black, murky tar.



Kuva 15. Oulun konepajan valmistama tervauuni 1800-luvun lopusta.

In 2018, new EU regulations required every pine-tar producer with a yearly production of over 1,000 litres to register their product or the sale would be prohibited. This almost resulted in the end of Finnish tar production, but luckily private sponsors helped the three remaining large-volume tar producers to raise the sum of 150,000 Euros, that was needed for the registration. The demand for their product is so high that it usually has to be ordered in advance. Many societies and even private persons continue to burn high quality tar in quantities of under 1,000 litres.

The largest tar producer today is China where tar burning is an even older tradition than in Europe. Unfortunately, the origin and quality of Chinese tar is usually unknown, and though resellers write Stockholm Tar on the label, the content can be disappointing and not necessarily even of pine origin.

A Finnish saying: “If you want to do it properly, do it with tar”.

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AGM 2022 5th- 8th May

Please read the enclosed notices about the 40th Anniversary meeting in Ipswich UK.

If you can’t make it, please note that the AGM will begin at 2100 BST (UTC+1) on Friday 6th, and the Trustees intend to make the meeting also available by Zoom.

The organisers are very keen to find members prepared to give a presentation. YOUR Guild needs YOU

More Knots on Wood

by Vernon Hughes

Some years ago, at a bi-monthly meeting of the UK's West Country Branch, Jonathon Haines tabled a photograph of a display model he had come across of some basic sailing-ship rigging, and suggested that the branch might like to make something similar as an instructive practical project. The finished piece could perhaps then be incorporated into our display pack taken to shows and exhibitions attended by the branch team, led and organized faithfully over many years by Richard Hopkins. It would of course be necessary to find 'someone' to make the wooden components, eight deadeyes and two horizontal boards. The proposition was welcomed wholeheartedly, and a likely candidate to undertake the woodwork happened to be present at that meeting. The work was mainly turning, but with a little carpentry in making the boards, etc. All ten components were duly produced at the next meeting, although over time it emerged that only one board was required. A photograph of the finished display piece is included here.

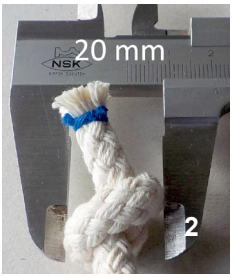
Making the wooden components was a pleasing and purposeful task although it demanded close attention to Jonathon's photograph to get the design details right, (eg hole positions, board dimensions and spacings, etc). The meeting specified an ideal diameter (4 in) for the deadeyes but all other dimensions and details had to be extrapolated from that by close observation of the photograph and checked by careful measurement at all stages.

By good fortune, a length of planed oak of suitable dimensions was in stock for the eyes; a piece of less noble timber was used for the boards, but after staining they looked fine.

At the next meeting the ten components passed muster, and members fell upon the rope and knotwork tasks with unbounded enthusiasm and seemed to know instantly exactly what was required, to the astonishment of the onlooking landlubber of a turner. It eventually took a few months to pull the whole project together, Richard working industriously with imagination and resourcefulness to design and construct the mast and all its fixings, which had to be readily demountable for transportation and storage purposes (all by Richard of course). Europa made an individual contribution tying some Turks Heads to decorate the base of the mast. The finished piece provides an excellent and substantial contribution to the branch display stand, and making it gave great satisfaction to all involved.

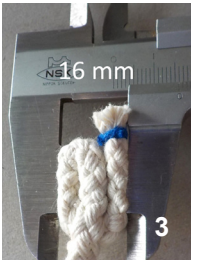
A Mini Stopper
by Theo Slijkerman

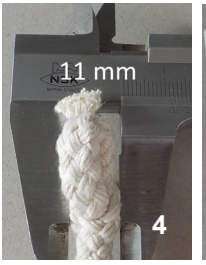
If you need a very small Stopper knot, this might be a solution, the mini-stopper [1].

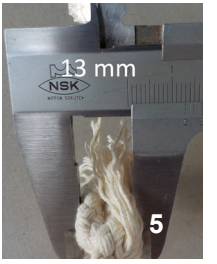


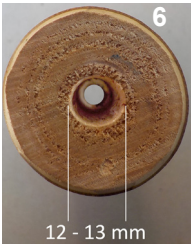
While making handles in 8mm braided cotton cord, I got the idea for this stopper which should be hidden in the handle. For the smallest common Stopper knot, the Overhand knot, a hole of 20mm is needed [2]. With a mini-stopper, this can be much smaller.

The mini-stopper is not round, in 8mm cord, it measures 16mm [3] in one direction and 11mm [4] in the other. The condition is that the hole for the cord is tight, in this case 8mm and for the mini-stopper a hole of 16mm is sufficient. But it can be even smaller. By not whipping the end of the mini-stopper (Constrictor knot), but fluffing it out, the measurement becomes 13mm [5].





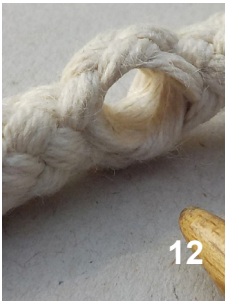


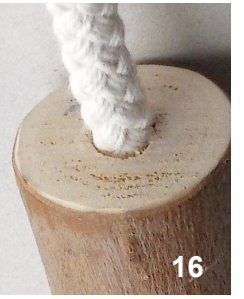


Note that it is imperative that the stopper with fluffed-out end be very tight in the hole and it is possible to pull this stopper into a 12mm hole [6 and 7]. Conclusion: The diameter required for the stopper hole is approximately 1.6 x the diameter of the cord.

Because the mini-stopper is flat, it can also be used in plywood, and stays completely within the thickness of the board [8 and 9].

The pictures [10] through [16] require no explanation.



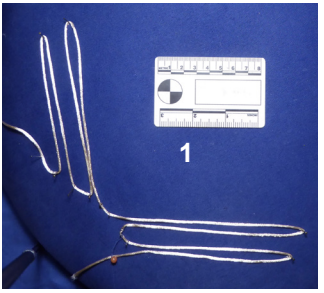


Tying into the Third Dimension by Halves

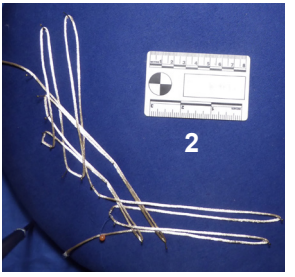
by Europa Chang Dawson

So far, all the Pan Chang knots have been flat forms except when there is something in the pocket between the two layers. What follows is a method for three-dimensional forms tied with a single strand. Historically, these were made only infrequently – partly because they require a degree of confidence as well as some experience in knotting, and partly because the length of time and cord required would result in the knotter making them to commission only. However, for the sake of completeness, the method is recorded here.

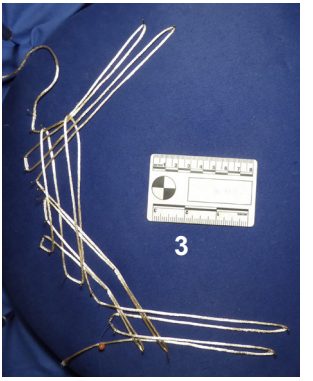
The tying sequence is the same for all the knots shown. In the demonstration, an octagon has been set out as this was the one I learned on.

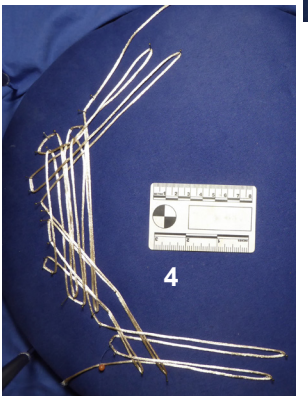


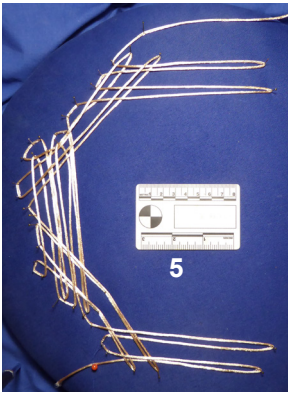
1 Start of sides 1 & 3, This is the same start as for a 4x4 Knot of Longevity, but with four finger-bights split into two pairs angled to each other, the angle depending on the number of sides in the polygon. As before this is being demonstrated clockwise, though as a good little Chinese girl I learned to tie it widdershins.



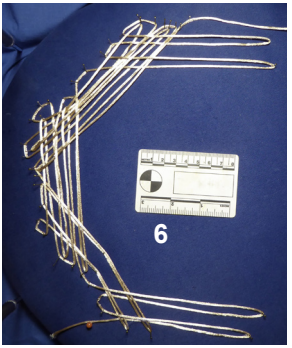
2&3 Starting sides 2 & 4.





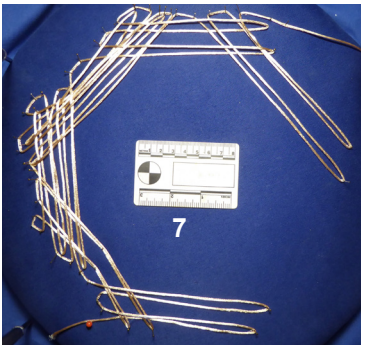


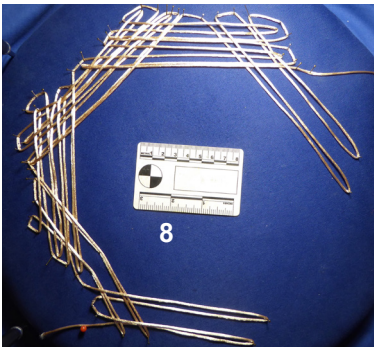
4 Returning to side 3 to give the third set of finger-bights; 5 starting off side 5. So far all the steps jump the next side and all the finger-bights are simply looped in. Now comes a change in patterning.



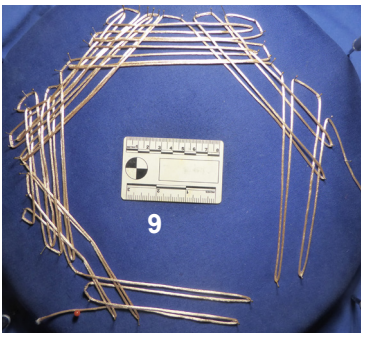
6 The corner between sides 3 & 4 needs to be locked, so the cord passes through as a single end and returns through the bights in the same sequence at the corner between sides 4 & 5 (after having woven its way through the bights in the previous corner.

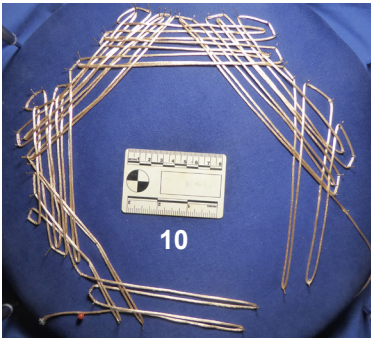
This sequence of images (1-15) showing the detailed tying instructions is also available, in a larger format, in the *KM* pages on the website - Editors

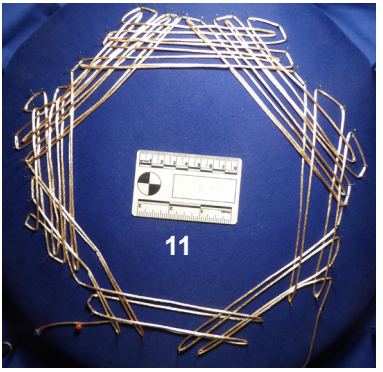


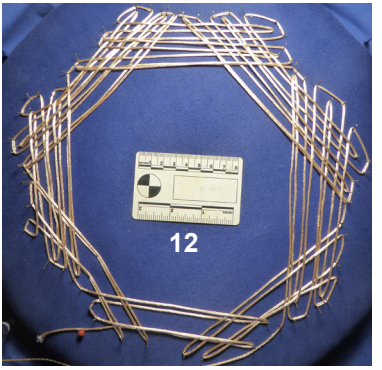


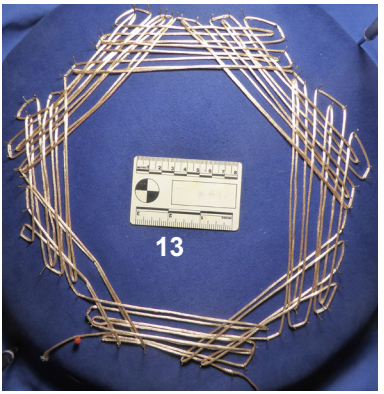
7 & 8, 9 & 10, 11 & 12 The sequence now repeats following photos 6 & 7, but moving one corner further until the first and last sides of the polygon have begun the locking sequence. [photo 13] see next page

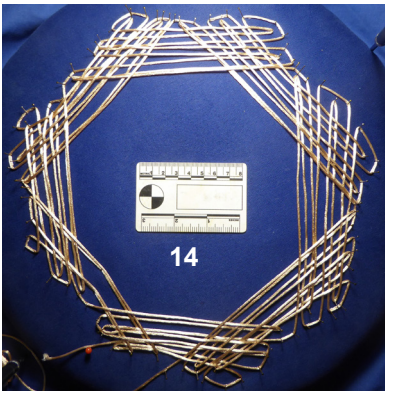




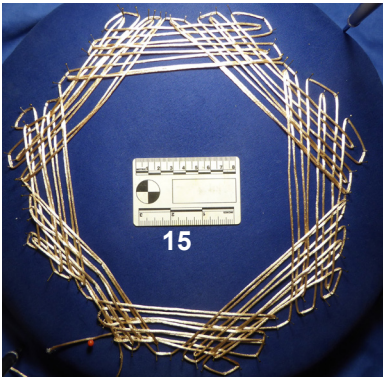








14 Shows how the corners between sides 7 & 8 and 8 & 1 both need to have the fourth set of finger-bights interwoven, and then



15 Shows how the last set of interwoven pairs lock the corners between sides 8 & 1 and 1 & 2 to complete the circuit.

If you would prefer to try this with a smaller polygon, I suggest beginning with a hexagon as six sides is easier to set out than one with an odd number. [If you try this with a four-sided form, you end up with a 4x4 Knot of Longevity.] The triangle form is the trickiest of the set, so try one or two of the other polygons first. [*ABOK* #2462 gives the trivial case of the pentagon, and *ABOK* #2458 & #2459 those of the triangle.]

As a rule of thumb, I estimate a working length of 80cm/side of polygon for six sides or fewer, and 1m/side for any polygon with more sides when using 1.5mm cord. This makes for hours of easing out the slack, but does give space for interweaving the finger-bights. Once your polygon is locked, begin tightening – SLOWLY!

16 This happened because I had tightened up the octagon to form the Caltrop variation and cut the ends. Then I realised there was no photo to demonstrate how much smaller the knot had become – but the cord I had left wasn't quite enough to form an octagon.

Photo 16, the knot is drawn up enough to take a shape, and a small lump of cotton wool could have been inserted to give the knot solidity, or a disc/coin put in and the knot tightened to make a bezel. Alternatively you could continue to tighten (easing out metres of cord) until the

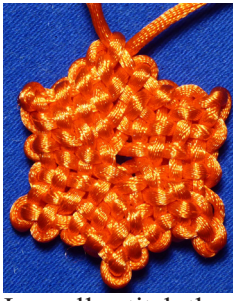
central hole closes up tight. This will give a form like a fat starfish bead.

To achieve this you will need to pull up very tight, or the form will not hold.

Photo 17 shows a further possibility, made by keeping the two faces of the knot in contact with each other while pulling up – this will give a caltrop-like solid which cannot be coaxed into a starfish as the cord has been pulled so very tight.

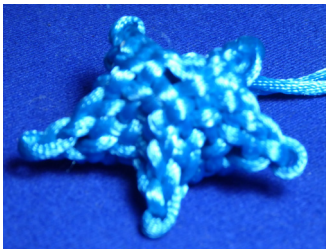
[NB Starfish can be knotted from any polygon form but the caltrops are possible only if the polygon has an even number of sides.]

Once the knot is fully tightened, the ends need to be held close to prevent the cord from working loose.



I usually stitch the ends together and tuck them into the middle of the knot, or bring one end back into the middle while easing the other end out – like the way the Calyx knot is transformed into the Lotus Seed-pod (*KM* 147) and then whip the two ends side by side.

For the triangular form (and do practice the hexagon and pentagon first!) you need to adapt the instructions. It is fairly obvious once you have understood the general sequence for the polygons, so my challenge is that you try to work it out.



All these forms may be embellished with pendant knots, tassels, beads or have wrappings of coloured thread round some bights. Traditionally, the wrappings and tassels are most likely, for they could be done by someone at home, using a purchased knot.

The limits of this are only the length of the cord and the confidence of the knotter – have a play!

2-Pass Perfect Herringbone Knots

by Manny Sardina

Looking at Perfect Herringbone Knots, made with one length of cord, and reading through Tom Hall's braiding book, I came up with a way to figure out the run lists. This can be done via Algorithm Generator[1] but a formulaic method might be interesting or helpful to others. Messrs Schaake and Turner, and possibly Sedgewick, have produced a mathematical method, although I must admit I couldn't understand it.

You'll need the half-cycle sequence based on the leads and bights of the knot that you are looking at. This is covered in detail in Tom Hall's book or available on his YouTube under 'Tom Hall Braiding and Knots'. For our first example we will use a 5Lx4B which gives the half-cycle sequence 0 3 2 1 and then repeats. The first zero is discarded and then the sequence repeats to the length of Leads-1 (ie 4). Giving 3 2 1 0. To start you off and to also ease the pain of the calculations, I have added a few half-cycle lists at the bottom of this article.

The magic is in recognising that there are four sequences, A to D, for 2-pass perfect herringbones, that are repeated in turn. (3-pass herringbones require six sequences). The structure of the knot requires an even number of bights. The standard Turks Head rule of mutually prime leads and bights still applies, so this dictates that the number of leads must be odd.

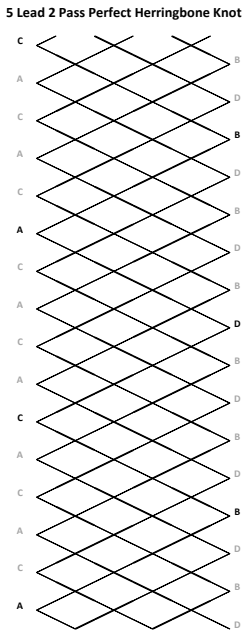
For 2-Pass Perfect Herringbones

Sequence A begins with U2 and then continues O2 U2 O2, etc. Once you reach the end of the first half-cycle, the next sequence begins with the last and then continues the pattern. In the example below, sequence A ends with U2, so B begins with U1 and then O2 U2 to continue the sequence. B ends U2 O1, so C begins with O1 and then another O1 to continue the sequence. C ends O2, so D begins O1 and then continues with U2 and so on. D finishes with O2 U1, so the last one here is U1 which brings us back nicely to the A sequence.

Whichever knot you are tying you will need the half-cycle length to be one less than the number of leads. In this case we need to repeat the patterns for a count of 4, 5 leads minus 1.

	3 2 1 0
A	U U O O Begins U2. Ends O2
B	O U U O Begins O1 U2. Ends with U2 O1
C	O O U U Begins with O2. Ends with U2
D	U O O U Begins with U1 O2. Ends with O2 U1

[1] can be found at tomhallbraidingandknots.com



To generate the run list, you always begin with a free run to the top of the first bight and then look for the zero in the half-cycle list. Note the letters in rows A and B that fall under the zero. O and U.

For subsequent half-cycles you need to include the next number and all below it. So when using 1 you will need to use the 0s (zeros) as well.

The full list is given below with the weaves indicated in red on each half-cycle. Note that the sequence continues for the required four bights.

The half-cycle sequences A and C relate to alternate weaves from one side of the bight whilst B and D to alternate weaves from the other side. Because of this we can begin with any of the sequences. Below are the possible combinations for a 5x4 knot. My preference in this case is the second option beginning with sequence B, which eliminates many of the unders in the initial stages.

2-Pass Herringbones have under-bights and over-bights, so be sure to rest the over-bights on the shoulders of the unders to help the knot find its final tightened shape.

5x4 (A)

Bight		3 2 1 0	Half-cycle sequence
1		Free Run	
	A0	U U O O	O
2	B0	O U U O	O
	C1	O O U U	U2
3	D1	U O O U	O1 U1
	A2	U U O O	U1 O2
4	B2	O U U O	U2 O1
	C3	O O U U	2 U2

5x4 (B)

Bight		3 2 1 0	Half-cycle sequence
1		Free Run	
	B0	O U U O	O1
2	C0	O O U U	U1
	D1	U O O U	O1 U1
3	A1	U U O O	O2
	B2	O U U O	U2 O1
4	C2	O O U U	O1 U2
	D3	U O O U	U1 O2 U1

5L Herringbone

Editors' note: A much larger version of this above grid of Manny's, and two others, are in the KM section of the IGKT website.

5x4 (C)

Bight	3 2 1 0		Half-cycle sequence
1		Free Run	
	C1	O O U U	U1
2	D0	U O O U	U1
	A0	U U O O	O2
3	B1	O U U O	U1 O1
	C1	O O U U	O1 U2
4	D2	U O O U	O2 U1
	A2	U U O O	U2 O2

5x4 (D)

Bight	3 2 1 0		Half-cycle sequence
1		Free Run	
	D0	U O O U	U1
2	A0	U U O O	O1
	B1	O U U O	U1 O1
3	C1	O O U U	U2
	D2	U O O U	O2 U1
4	A2	U U O O	U1 O2
	B3	O U U O	O1 U2 O1

Complex Herringbone

For a 7Lx6B 2-Pass Perfect Herringbone knot, I have begun the sequence this time with B instead of A to take advantage of the initial overs

7x6 (B)

Bight		5 4 3 2 1 0	Half-cycle sequence
1		Free Run	
	B0	U O O U U O	O1
2	C0	O O U U O O	O1
	D1	O U U O O U	O1 U1
3	A1	U U O O U U	U2
	B2	U O O U U O	U2 O1
4	C2	O O U U O O	U1 O2
	D3	O U U O O U	U1 O2 U1
5	A3	U U O O U U	O2 U2
	B4	U O O U U O	O2 U2 O1
6	C4	O O U U O O	O1 U2 O2
	D5	O U U O O U	O1 U2 O2 U1

You will note below that in some of the half-cycle sequences, eg 5x8, not all the numbers from 0 to 6 are included, which occurs in wider knots, where the number of bights is greater than the number of leads. Below is an example of how to create the run list for this. I have begun with the D sequence to take advantage of the initial overs.

5x8 (D)

Bight		3 6 1 4	Half-cycle sequence
1			Free Run
	D0	O U U O	Free Run
2	A0	O O U U	Free Run
	B1	U O O U	O1
3	C1	U U O O	O1
	D2	O U U O	U1
4	A2	O O U U	U1
	B3	U O O U	U1 O1
5	C3	U U O O	U1 O1
	D4	O U U O	O1 U1 O1
6	A4	O O U U	O1 U2
	B5	U O O U	U1 O1 U1
7	C5	U U O O	U1 O2
	D6	O U U O	U1 U2 O1
8	A6	O O U U	O2 U2
	B7	U O O U	U1 O2 U1

Herringbone in mat layout

Our final example (next page) is a longer knot with eight bights. Notice in this case that there are two 2s in the half-cycle sequence, both are to be used in working out the run list.

1x8 (A)

Bight		5 2 7 4 1 6 3 0 5 2	Half-cycle sequence
1			Free Run
	A0	U U O O U U O O U U	O1
2	B0	U O O U U O O U U O	U1
	C1	O O U U O O U U O O	O1 U1
3	D1	O U U O O U U O O U	O2
	A2	U U O O U U O O U U	U2 O1 U1
4	B2	U O O U U O O U U O	O1 U2 O1
	C3	O O U U O O U U O O	O2 U2 O1
5	D3	O U U O O U U O O U	U1 O1 U1 O1 U1 O1
	A4	U U O O U U O O U U	U1 O1 U1 O2 U1
6	B4	U O O U U O O U U O	O1 U2 O1 U1 O1
	C5	O O U U O O U U O O	O2 U1 O1 U2 O2
7	D5	O U U O O U U O O U	O1 U1 O2 U1 O2 U1
	A6	U U O O U U O O U U	U2 O1 U2 O2 U2
8	B6	U O O U U O O U U O	U1 O1 U2 O2 U2 O1
	C7	O O U U O O U U O O	O2 U2 O2 U2 O2

The beauty of this half-cycle sequence is that it can be used for many weaves of the same combination of leads and bights as long as you have identified the correct number of half-cycle sequences, including Turks Heads, Spanish Rings, Gauchos, Gaucho fans, Headhunters, Josephines, Ginfers, Hansens, 2-pass Herringbones and 3-pass Herringbones, Slow Helix, Fast Helix and Basket weaves.

A few more half cycle sequences are given below to save you calculating them again.

5x4 3 2 1 0
7x4 1 2 3 0 1 2
9x4 3 2 1 0 3 2 1 0
11x4 1 2 3 0 1 2 3 0 1 2
13x4 3 2 1 0 3 2 1 0 3 2 1 0
15x4 1 2 3 0 1 2 3 0 1 2 3 0 1 2
17x4 3 2 1 0 3 2 1 0 3 2 1 0 3 2 1 0

5x6 1 2 3 4
7x6 5 4 3 2 1 0
11x6 1 2 3 4 5 0 1 2 3 4
13x6 5 4 3 2 1 0 5 4 3 2 1 0
17x6 1 2 3 4 5 0 1 2 3 4 5 0 1 2 3 4

5x8 3 6 1 4
7x8 1 2 3 4 5 6
9x8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
11x8 5 2 7 4 1 6 3 0 5 3
13x8 3 6 1 4 7 2 5 8 1 4 7 0
15x8 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
17x8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

7x10 7 4 1 8 5 2
9x10 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
11x10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
13x10 3 6 9 2 5 8 1 4 7 0 2 4
17x10 7 4 1 8 5 2 9 6 3 0 7 4 1 8 5 2

5x12 7 2 9 4
7x12 5 10 3 8 1 6
11x12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
13x12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
17x12 7 2 9 4 11 6 1 8 3 10 5 0 7 2 9 4

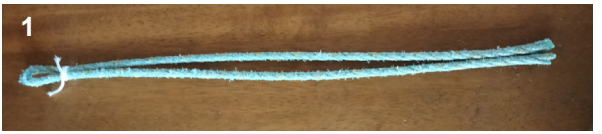
Three-rope Pot Hanger
by Brian Taylor*

*Courtesy of Jim Caswell

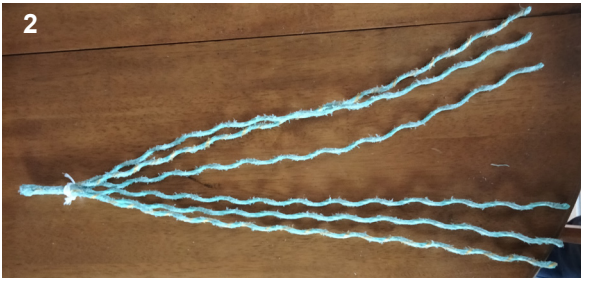
I posed this question to Jim last year: "I want to splice three ropes together as a hanger for a rope pot. Any ideas?"

I had tried myself and was not happy with the result, which was not very neat or tidy. Jim used some lateral thinking and came up with this brilliant solution

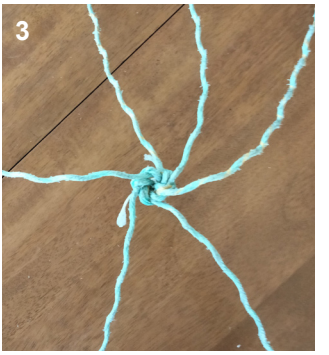
1 Middle the 3-strand rope and tie a Constrictor knot around it 2in (50mm) from the doubled end.



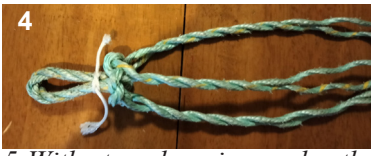
2 Unlay both ropes which now gives you six strands.



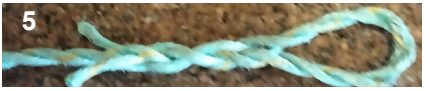
3 Tie a Wall knot next to the Constrictor knot & tighten.

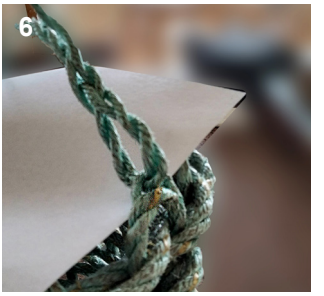


4 With two adjacent strands, re-lay the pairs of strands into three 2-strand ropes. Start by laying the yarn nearest to you under, then over the one above. You will feel the lay falling into place.



5 With strands going under the other strand in opposite directions, the three ends can be eye-spliced to be attached to the pot



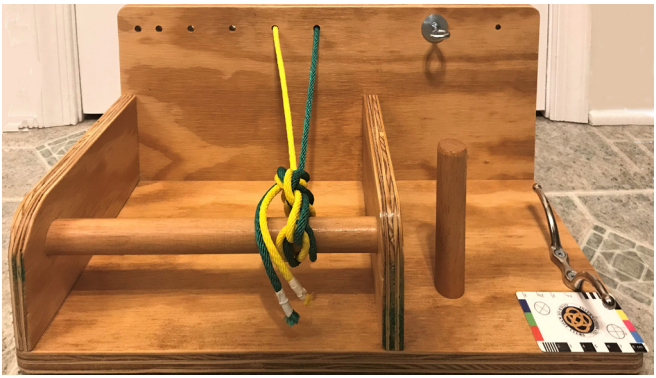


6 For a rope pot-holder, insert under one strand of the basket loop.

A Portable Knot-Tying Station

by Mark Zagursky

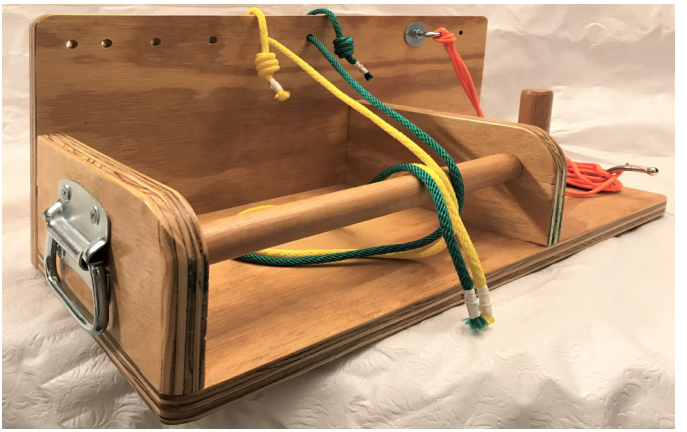
My journey towards learning a variety of knots, and their history, began because I only knew a handful of different knot types. Like so many others, when a situation arose needing a specific knot to loop around a post, or moor a boat, or whatever, I would just use one of the few that I knew and tie them multiple times, thinking that if one knot is good, more must be better. I called it the "Hope and Ugly" approach to knot tying, and trusted my efforts would hold, and I found several other people did the same. It's obviously not the correct approach to any knot-tying need, but we all lacked the necessary knowledge and skill. So, in south central Pennsylvania USA, how to go about acquiring them?



A quick internet search yielded a zero count of knotting clubs or knot-related resources within a 200-mile radius. So the next logical step for me was to contact the International Guild of Knot Tyers (IGKT) which I joined a few years ago, since when I have thoroughly enjoyed the knowledge gained through *Knotting Matters*. Not every article is appropriate for my level of knowledge, but the good news is I'm improving, and the information I need is readily available in print and through our Guild's online resources.

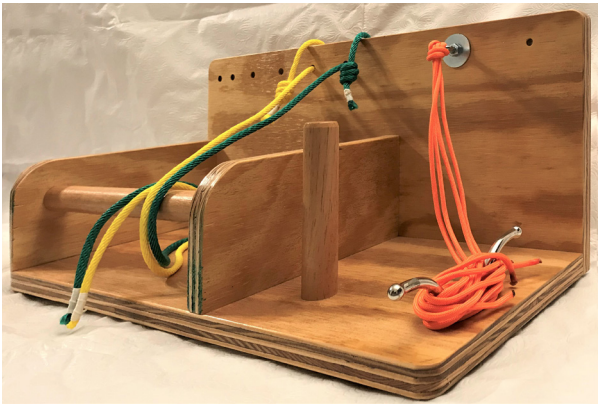
Sadly, having contacted a few members of the Mid-Atlantic branch, I discovered that there were none living near me. How could I progress any further with no 'in person' training available? Previously, in similar ventures, I have learned that if you want to become familiar with the intricacies of a subject, learn it first as best you can using the resources at hand, then begin teaching it.

Through the necessary repetition involved and the interaction with others while teaching, which often involves research to be able answer questions, one's knowledge of the subject increases remarkably. I'm not, of course, suggesting that becoming a specialist at knotting doesn't take extensive knowledge, time, and practice, but to be that proficient, you have to start somewhere.



Therefore, it was back to the internet and the Guild's own resources for additional research, as well as publicly available publications. It all served to increase my fascination for the world of knotting and need to discover more. And it was this, fast-forward about a year ago, that prompted my need to construct my own portable knot-tying station. There were some designs to be found, all with their own advantages and disadvantages, but very few included any instructions or dimensions.

As a degree-qualified electrical and mechanical engineer, I knew I had to set some basic criteria. For my needs, it had to be portable, durable, allow the practice of a variety of knots, be easily made from readily available materials



and with the minimum of tools. None of the existing models met all my criteria, so I had to design my own. I'm not suggesting mine is the epitome of a portable knot tying station, but I hope it will appeal to many fellow knot tyers who want to practise, and teach, knots. Apologies to those unfamiliar with the imperial units of measurement, but the US and its hardware stores have yet to come fully abreast of the metric system.

Construction is from ½ in plywood with several coats of waterproof polyurethane for use outdoors, and all wood edges are sanded smooth and all the holes are also chamfered on the front and back to prevent snagging during use. The 1in diameter cross-bar is countersunk ¼ in into the supporting plywood.

All the joints are glued and screwed. The hardware is of stainless steel; the handle on the side is for carrying the equipment. When my skills have improved sufficiently, I will replace it with a becket. Not visible on the base are four ½in diameter screw-on high-grip urethane anti-skid foot pads, to protect whatever surface the equipment is on, and to prevent it sliding around during use. I hope the pictures tell the rest of the story. I do find my design very useful for teaching many knots, loops, bends, and hitches. I would be very pleased to hear if anyone makes one like it, or improves on it in some way. Please send me a photo so it can be shared with other members.

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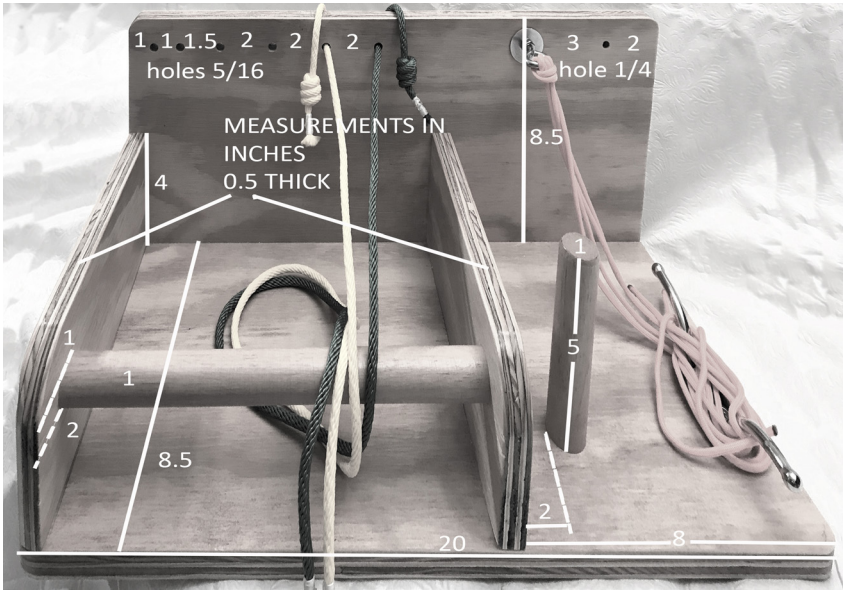


The Pentagon Frame

by John Trevvett

The newly-inducted US Navy's Chief of Naval Operations was strolling through the halls of the Pentagon when his attention was drawn to a polished wooden display-case in an alcove dedicated to the Secretary of the Navy. Inside that case was a Sennit Frame made for the SecNav and that's where this story begins.

It was not long after that when the owner of *The Bosn's Locker* in SanDiego, CA (purveyor of hard to find items for the fleet) received a phone call from the CNO's staff with a request.

"Do you know anyone who could make a knotted frame for the CNO?"

So Bill at *The Bosn's Locker* called Skip Hipps wanting to know if he could produce a depiction of the flag of the CNO in knots, 3ft x 4ft with a Sennit frame around it, overall dimensions 4ft x 5ft. Skip said he surely could make a big frame for the flag. But the reply was "No Skip, the flag needs to be in knots too!"

Skip, after deciding he could do it and establishing terms with the Chief at the Pentagon, sat down to hash out the details of this massive project. He noticed a YouTube channel called Trevvett Knots. John Trevvett was, of all things, doing tutorials on Skip's favourite subject, Sennit Frames, so Skip contacted him and they quickly became good friends. As it turned out both John and Skip were former Navy electricians …. not Bosn's Mates!

When pondering the nuts and bolts of the project, it took him a few days of perusing past work and various knot books until he came upon the idea of using Sword Mat: but it was only a partial solution. To cover 12 sq ft would mean tying something like 100ft of Sword Mat. The question was how to make that much and not lose one's mind out of repetitious boredom, not to mention the time. He had another idea!

Skip travelled to Virginia to work with John Trevvett to create a video on Skip's idea of modifying an Inkle Loom to manufacture

long narrow bands of Sword Mat. A standard Inkle loom is not capable of manufacturing Sword Matting. A detailed video of the necessary modifications is available on the YouTube Channel 'Trevvett Knots'.

Two-tone Sword Mat

Not two months later, because Skip had re-aggravated an old back injury leaving him unable to do any leaning-over to work on the project, he asked John to complete it.

He delivered the carefully bagged pieces and parts and John began the two-month-long, mad dash to create a one-of-a-kind gigantic frame project that he knew would be on view to military and political dignitaries from around the world. No pressure!

Skip's design used Sword Mat horizontal bands (27 strands in 3mm cotton). Half of the background sennit was dyed navy blue in John's kitchen. 8-strand half-round was used to cover the junction between the sections. The diagonal division between the navy blue and white sections of the flag would be joined by another 8-strand half-round tied in half blue/half white. All of this was attached to a canvas-covered piece of plywood. The four stars to be affixed to the flag were modified Star Mats (*Encyclopaedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work* Plate 143-fig. 97).

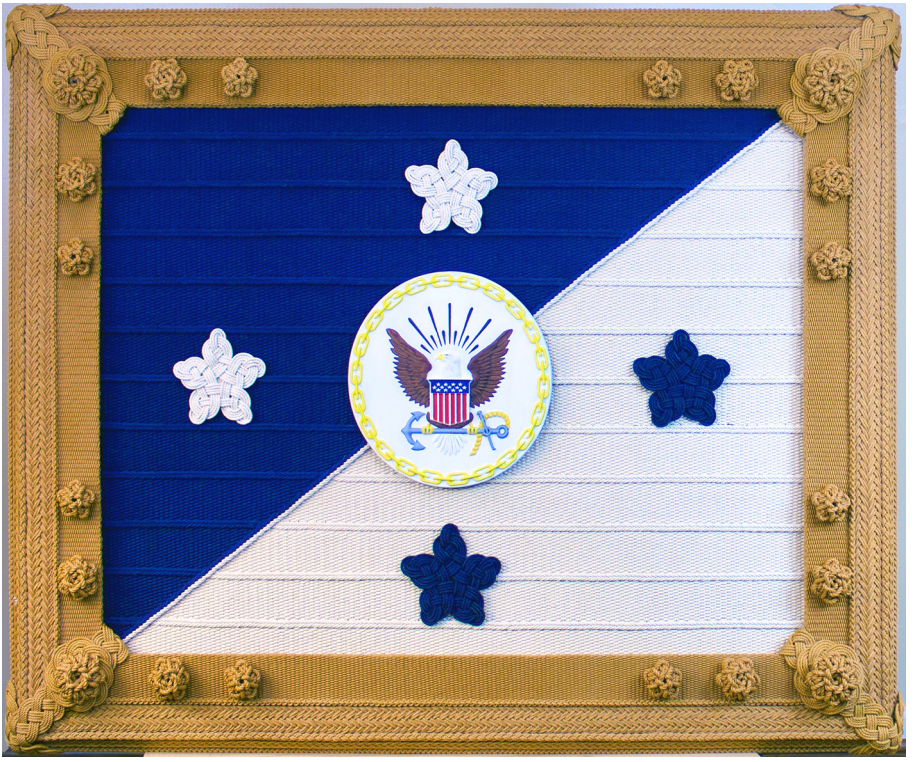
The maple frame was customized and assembled by a cabinet maker and was covered in 19oz canvas. The sennit bands covering the frame are as follows: 3-strand sennit doubled as the inner band, 41-strand sword mat in 3mm, 4-strand round braid in 3mm, 11-strand herringbone doubled, 4-strand round braid in 2.75mm doubled, 17-strand interlacing in 3mm is on the 45° angle at the outside of the frame, then another 4-strand round braid cover sennit, and the back band is 10-strand flat sennit in 3mm.

The features of the frame consist of 5-, 6- and 8-point crowned Star knots with the lines extended around the outside of the knot (prior to securing the ends) rather than through the bights, which create the stars' points. The 8-point Star knots are fixed atop of 8-point flat Diamond knots doubled, at each corner.

Each corner of the frame is covered in a Sailor's Cross mat tied in 4.5mm with 4 passes.

The finish for the frame is custom-mixed shellac, blended to imitate the colour of the old navy spar varnish. Finally, the entire project is sealed in a single coat of water-based polyurethane.

The only portion that isn't knots is the Seal of the CNO. This was fashioned from a 33cm disc of black walnut with a CNC router and made by Dan Noel of Knotical USA who also provided the approximately 5,500 feet of line required for the project. The seal was hand-painted by John's sister Anne Trevvett.The actual frame was ultimately John's design. He said, "I decided to keep it simple and make it what I believed would reflect a formal military bearing" he said,



John and his masterpiece

adding, jokingly "Well, I also was pressed for time ... it had to stay basic."

Skip Hipps

The final frame weighs 82lbs and took an estimated 230 man-hours to complete. The Flag Writer to the CNO travelled from Washington, DC to take delivery, it just fitted into his own SUV with an inch to spare. The work is now owned by the Naval History and Heritage Command and is on loan to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations at the Pentagon (hence the name Pentagon Frame).

Admiral Michael Gilday CNO has invited Skip and John to visit the Pentagon to thank them personally for a job well done, once the Covid protocols allow.

Editors' note: In the limited space available, we fear we cannot adequately illustrate the quality of the knotting, which is quite outstanding.

PUBLICATIONS GROUP

Turk's Heads the Traditional Way by Eric Franklin

Eric Franklin, a founder member of the IGKT, was already an established author on knots when he attended the inaugural meeting in April 1982. He had produced a number of books on knots since the 1950s and also produced many pages of the Guild's *Knot Charts*. One publication he offered to the IGKT, along with the copyright, was *Turk's Heads the Traditional Way*. This booklet, originally set on a typewriter with Eric's excellent drawings, has been a firm Guild favourite through a number of reprints.

One of the tasks given to the PG when an edition is running low, is to decide if a reprint is necessary and what needs to be updated before going to press. During this review process, a number of errors, both typographical and artistic, were spotted and corrected. Eric was in good company here, as even the renowned Clifford Ashley is known to have missed a number of over-under crossings!

Members who already have a copy of this booklet can obtain a PDF of the revised section in the members' area of the IGKT website. The reprinted publication can of course be obtained from the Supplies Secretary. PG

New Ideas?

by David Hadland

I suppose I started tying knots about 10 years ago, but it is only in the past 5 years I really became more interested. I think that, because of my naval background as a seaman that I chose it as my main hobby (sometimes frustrating but enjoyable). I am due to retire from the construction industry in a few years and so hope to be able to spend more time knotting.

I came across tying on rings, whilst tying a Ringbolt hitch on a wooden ring and wondered if I could extend it to 2 rings. This proved unsuccessful, but I found that by tying rings to a mandrel I could create different knots and weaves.

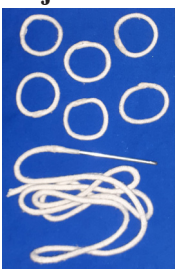
I have had a few interesting/interested comments from other knotters – Mikko Snellman, Sue Pennison, Lilly Maus and Mabel Marble – to name just a few, and I thank them for their interest which encouraged me to submit this to *Knotting Matters*.

I hope that this will be a start of many posting and new ideas from fellow knotters around the world. Who knows, the creations could be endless and possibly extend to boat fenders and even mats?

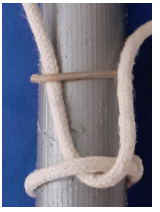
Making the rings is done separately from the 'weaving cord', but they are best made by using the same colour, thickness and type of cord. Make the ring to the size of the core / mandrel you are tying onto and loose enough for the weaving cord to be able to go between it and the core (though the spacer rings can be made more snug). Wrap the ring around the core and tie the ends together with thread using one or two Constrictor knots. Adjust the ring to the correct size, tighten the Constrictor(s) and trim the ends.

NB on synthetics such as paracord you can simply glue or fuse the ends together.

Adjustable-length sinnet.



To tie this you need a single strand and as many rings as necessary to cover the length that you want. NB rings can be added as you go.



Attach single strand to core and lay it under the first ring.

Back over ring to right

Under Standing end to left

Over ring then through loop to right, tighten comfortably.

Then flip over loop to left
Add next ring and continue pattern until you reach the required length.
At this point you can multi-strand by adding extra cords to fill the circumference or you can continue with a single strand

Take running end over and back under to left on the last ring, back over ring through loop to left, over ring through loop to right. Tighten and dress, then continue pattern until the object is covered.

Extendable 7-ring Button knot

7 rings total: 2 top rings, 3 middle spacer rings and 2 bottom rings. You can make this knot using 3 rings and up to 10, the more rings you use the more the pattern will change.

Lay the cord down over all the rings

Under bottom 2 rings to the left

Over all rings to the right

Under top 2 rings to left

Over all cords and rings to right

Under bottom 2 rings to left

Over all cord and rings to right and complete pattern until last pass.

Complete last pass to top then under top and through the knot. Cut off.

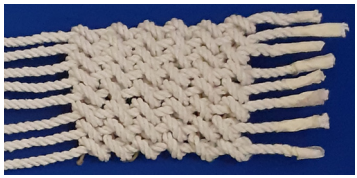
NB The spacing rings are used to lengthen the knot. You can use a minimum of 3 rings up to 7 rings. Adding more, changes the appearance, but will also create another knot.

The advantages I found with this knot was that, because it is tied vertically you can use it as a cover knot to the length that you need. Also, when tying a long version, instead of using spacing rings, you can wrap (the same type of) cord around the core – to the length that you need and then add the top and bottom rings.

I've added a few images of other possibilities which I'd be happy to share with colleagues, if you wish - davidhadland2706@gmail.com

6-ring cover knot

5-ring twister
7-ring button
2-ring cover



8-strand flat sinnet on rings

Teignmouth Maritime and Shanty Festival

In case any readers had heard about the outstanding success of last year's Teignmouth Maritime and Shanty Festival, ably supported by the IGKT, and might have had plans to visit it this year, word has just reached us that the 2022 Festival has been cancelled.

It's very much a victim of its own success, so it has been decided by the Festival committee to conserve resources, make it biennial, and put on an even bigger and better show in 2023. Watch out for news next year.

It's really worth a visit!

OBITUARY

Bob Pearce

14th July 1932 - 27th January 2022

Robert Michael Pearce was born in the East End of London in 1932 but grew up mostly in Suffolk, as his father was the chief engineer for the RNLI along the eastern coast of England. His spare childhood days were spent on day-long outings, usually to places with rivers and boats to mess about on, and this is where his lifelong passion for the sea began. As he got older the agricultural bias of the local school failed to satisfy him so he joined the Navy as a Boy Seaman.

He trained first at TS Mercury on the River Hamble, where he became used to a daily swim between sea and shore. There then followed a long naval career on a variety of ships including HMS Vidal, HMS Ocean, HMS Unicorn, HMS St Brides Bay and many others. He travelled the world and gained vast experience of the sea and seamanship. He also trained as a swimming coach and played hockey, representing the navy in various tournaments.

Bob was twice married with two sons, a daughter and three grandchildren. On leaving the navy he trained as a teacher and when he no longer played competitive hockey, qualified as a hockey umpire. He had an enormous capacity for finding things interesting, retaining knowledge and relished the chance to share what he knew. Consequently when he retired in the 1990s he discovered the IGKT and became just as busy as before, sharing his knowledge of naval and maritime history. He will be remembered for the enthusiasm with which he passed on skills to members and to young people in particular. He would often be seen at events with a group of young people attracted by his knotting tricks and then engrossed in learning about knots.

At the age of 87 he was hospitalised for a month with an infection, and subsequently could not drive. He became less mobile and declined until he moved into a care home and then a nursing home. In January of this year he was taken into hospital with suspected pneumonia but sadly failed to respond to treatment and was moved to Winchester Hospice where he died on the evening of the 27th January.

Book Review

The Year of Knots by Windy Chien

published by Abrams (New York) 2019 ISBN: 978-1-4197-32-80-5

This good-looking hardback book of 191 pages, measuring 29cm x 26cm (11½ in x 10¼ in), is lavishly illustrated throughout. Windy Chien majored in film at college, worked in the music industry for 14 years, including owning and operating the landmark San Francisco shop, Aquarius Records, before joining the Apple corporation. Then, having changed course to become a creative artist within the Bay community, in 2016, on an impulse, she decided to learn and tie a new knot every day and to post them on Instagram. Fast-forward, and Windy is now consulted and commissioned to create major art installations in rope.

The original 366 knots (2016 being a Leap Year) remain in Windy's studio, but a more stylish arrangement of them features on a 30-foot wall in Facebook's campus. And readers of her book will find them on pages 174 to 189. From these, she chose 39 workaday and decorative ones to feature with step-by-step tying instructions. On tightening these knots, her advice is, *'*Work, don't yank*'*. The decision to have most of the knots, tied in white cord, and then photographed on a white background is offbeat.

She evidently sourced a lot of knot books, from Ashley to Philippe Petit, and maybe Harry Asher (as she tied his Simple Simon bend). "I wanted to learn from ye olde encyclopedias… and yet, via YouTube, I fell happily headfirst into the world of paracord." She liked single-strand button knots and multi-strand star knots. Her way into splices was via Captain Hardy's (aka crow's foot or cat's paw) eye splice. And occasionally a knot told her what it wanted to become. A multiple Figure Eight, with wrapping turns, made a neat corkscrew necklet; the heaving line knot grew into a sandworm dune creature; and a couple of macramé Square knots with a herringbone weave half-hitched body became a squid.

Having blazed her own trail of self-discovery, Windy hopes to inspire, encourage and guide others to realise their dreams, by means of 25 pages interleaved throughout the book with advice on merging artistic endeavour with the entrepreneurial acumen to view art as product.

Windy Chien's book is a refreshing change from the numerous publications that continue to emerge every year, yet fail to enrich the genre. *The Year of Knots* is matchless in its originality, and – in my opinion – worthy of a place in any knot tyer's library.

Geoffrey Budworth

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BACK COVER: DETAIL OF CAVANDOLI WORK BY GEOFFREY BUDWORTH SEE P9

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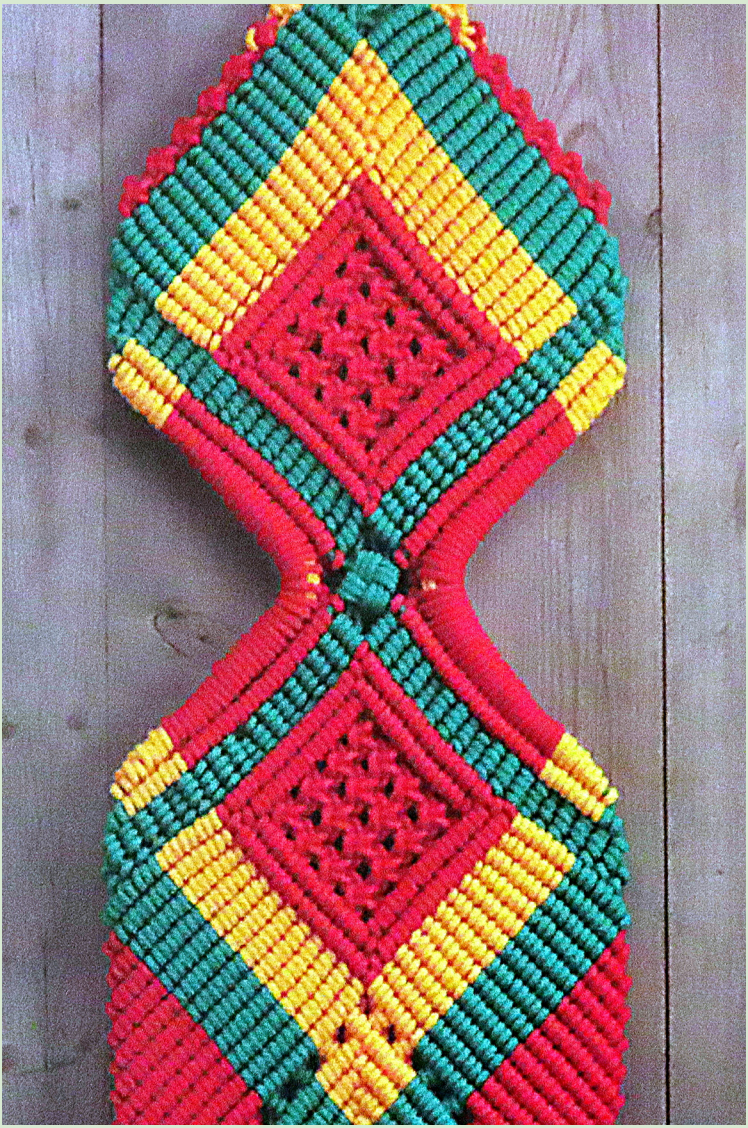
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